

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DEC 11 1979

DATE ENTERED

JAN 24 1980

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Charles Henry Parr House

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

100 W. Hulin Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Charles City

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3

STATE

Iowa

VICINITY OF

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Floyd County

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
DISTRICT	PUBLIC	OCCUPIED	AGRICULTURE MUSEUM
BUILDING(S)	PRIVATE	UNOCCUPIED	COMMERCIAL PARK
STRUCTURE	BOTH	WORK IN PROGRESS	EDUCATIONAL PRIVATE RESIDENCE
SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION		ENTERTAINMENT RELIGIOUS
OBJECT	IN PROCESS	YES: RESTRICTED	GOVERNMENT SCIENTIFIC
	BEING CONSIDERED	YES: UNRESTRICTED	INDUSTRIAL TRANSPORTATION
		NO	MILITARY OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Boyd G. Hayes

STREET & NUMBER

100 W. Hulin

STATE

CITY, TOWN

Charles City

VICINITY OF

Iowa

50616

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Floyd County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Charles City

STATE

Iowa

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This vernacular dwelling was built in 1902 by Charles Parr, who lived here until his death in 1941.

The house is of light wood frame construction, on a rock-faced stone basement. Basic dimensions are 30' x 34', with two small additions, 6' x 10' and 14' x 26', across the rear. The house is asymmetrically composed of a 2½-story, two-bay front gable intersected by a very wide side gable sweeping down to cover the west end of the front veranda. The front and rear gable ends have a rather broad pentroof below the attic story. A pentroof above the eastern 2/3 of the front veranda (added during the 1940's) joins the roof of the side gable. To the right of the front gable is a dormer with hip roof. Exterior wall surfaces are shingled above the first story, which is sheathed in narrow clapboards. Projecting polygonal bays are found on the front (to the left of the main entrance) and on the west side. 1/1 double hung sash windows are set in plain surrounds with narrow molded cornices. The veranda features plain, square wooden posts, and is edged by a low clapboard-covered wall that replaced an earlier spindled balustrade.

The first floor is arranged with livingroom and parlor to either side of a center hall, extending about to the middle of the house, where the main staircase branches off to the east. At the rear are dining-room (SE corner), kitchen (SW corner), pantry and large closets. The second floor has bedrooms in the NE, SE, and NW corners, with bath and storage area in the SW corner. There are many large closets and built-in cupboards throughout the house, installed by Charles Parr at the insistence of his wife, Gertrude.

The house is very well kept, and major alterations are limited to the reworking of the front veranda and the addition of two 1-story rooms at the rear. The garage behind the house is a recent acquisition.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES b. 1902

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Charles H. Parr

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This house is significant as the home of Charles H. Parr (1868-1941), who built the house in 1902 and lived here until 1941. Parr was co-founder, with Charles W. Hart, of the Hart-Parr Co., in Charles City, a firm that pioneered the development of gasoline tractors during the first decades of the 20th century.

The Hart-Parr Co. was "the first business in the U.S. devoted exclusively to the manufacture of tractors."¹ It is also credited with producing the "first successful production farm tractor engine" in 1902,² a two-cylinder horizontal, four-cycle engine capable of drawing a four or five bottom plow. Hart-Parr tractors (the firm is also credited with the introduction of this term³) contributed to a revolution in midwest agriculture as they replaced the much larger, heavier, and more awkward steam engines. The gas engines, noted for the "ruggedness" of their transmissions, were designed for "drawbar work" (pulling, plowing) as well as "beltwork" (threshing, etc.), and as the various models developed over the years, they helped move American agriculture from a small-scale, labor-intensive industry toward the large scale, heavily mechanized enterprise of today.

Charles Hart met Charles Parr at the University of Wisconsin (Madison), where both were students in the late 1890's. Their first collaboration was a thesis on gas engines, and they built several models to illustrate this work. After graduation, Hart and Parr opened a small shop in Madison, but in 1900 decided to relocate in Charles City, which appeared to be more centrally located with respect to their prospective customers. Their plant opened in 1901, and tractor #1 (Hart-Parr 17-30) appeared that same year. The firm was eventually to employ nearly 1,000 men, and produce new models every few years. Later models, beginning with #40-80 (1908-14) burned either gas or kerosene. Their largest, a four-cylinder vertical engine, was the 60-100 of 1911-12. Hart-Parr also produced stationary engines, and engines for road work. An unusual model was the "Little Red Devil" (1914-16), a two-cylinder, two-cycle thermosyphon water-cooled engine unique in its lack of valves, transmission and differential (the latter possible

(See Continuation Sheet)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Parr, C.H., "History of the Hart-Parr Co.," typescript, n.d.,
Charles City Public Library.
"Iowa's Great Tractor Factory," Iowa Factories, 1:5 (May, 19120,
10-17.
"Our Heritage: Bicentennial Review of Floyd County," 1976.

(See Continuation Sheet)

UTM NOT VERIFIED

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

QUADRANGLE NAME Charles City, Iowa
UTM REFERENCES

A 1 15 5 2 15 89 15 4 7 16 18 17 17 10
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

C
E
G

B
D
F
H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The NW 61.46 feet of Lots 7 and 8, Block 78; Kelly and Co. addition,
Charles City, Iowa

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

M. H. Bowers, Historian

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Division of Historic Preservation

September, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

26 East Market Street

319-353-6949

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Iowa City

Iowa 52240

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Adrian H. Bowers

TITLE Director, Division of Historic Preservation

DATE December 3, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Carol D. Shull

DATE

1-24-80

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: William H. Branham

DATE

1-23-80

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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because the tractor had but one rear wheel).

In the partnership, Parr appears to have been the inventor, while Hart's strength lay in management, and the latter's talents for organization and good business practice were noted in publications of the time.⁴ World War I, however, put a strain on both the business and the partnership. The market for agricultural engines plummetted, and the firm retooled for production of war material, principally shells. A 1915 contract with the British government fell through, but the firm was "saved" by the US entry into the war, and federal contracts for shells, casings for gun mounts, truck wheels, steering engines for ships, and tank parts. After the war, the partnership was dissolved. Hart sold out and moved to Montana, where he went in wheat farming and small-scale oil refining. Parr went to Wisconsin for a few years, and worked with Conrad Frudden (later associated with the Allis-Chalmers Co., also a tractor manufacturer) before returning to Charles City. Parr retained his connections with the company (working as an engineer for the firm), which had been purchased by the Ellis family, until his death in 1941.

The Hart-Parr Co. was merged with three other local companies in 1929, to form the Oliver Corporation, with headquarters in Chicago. Between 1929 and 1960, Oliver acquired many other companies specializing in a wide variety of agricultural equipment. The White Motor Co. of Cleveland, manufacturer of heavy-duty trucks, took over Oliver as a wholly-owned subsidiary in 1960. The Charles City plant, with almost nothing left of the old Hart-Parr factory, is now operated as the White Farm Equipment Co. tractor plant.

Footnotes:

¹ "Our Heritage," p.42.

² Gray, R.B., Development of the Agricultural Tractor in the United States (St. Joseph: American Society of Agricultural Engineers, 1956), p.16, quoted in White Motor Corporation, "Progress . . . in Tractor Power from 1898," (March, 1975), p.2.

³ White Motor Corporation, "Progress . . .", p.4.

⁴ Wooley, Edward Mott, "Secrets of Business Success," World's Work, 27 (1914), 346-352.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Bibliography

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Telephone Interview, 18 July 1979, with Robert Monroe, Charles City (nephew of Parr), and Mrs. Maurice Jensen, Castana, Iowa (daughter of Parr). Notes on file at SHPO.

Correspondence, July 1979 (letters undated) from Mrs. Maurice Jensen, Castana, Iowa.